

3. Water Cleanup Plans (TMDLs) and Standards

Activities and Measures - Water Quality Standards

- 3F. Ecology will begin rulemaking to revise the recreational use criteria in the surface water quality standards by September 2017. The public announcement will be a pre-proposal announcement (CR-101) as required by the Washington State Administrative Procedures Act (APA). Ecology can then begin stakeholder discussions, public information sessions, and discussions with EPA Region 10 staff on rule development. Dependent upon this CR-101 rule development process, Ecology will propose a rule by September 2018 in accordance with the CR-102 process of the APA which then requires a final rule within 180 days. Rule submittal to EPA is expected to be no later than April 2019.
- 3G. Ecology will make progress on developing a water quality standards guidance manual. This manual is intended to instruct agency staff working on CWA programs by providing, a documentation of the proper application of the WQ Standards within these programs including documentation of institutional knowledge, impact of legal decisions, and interpretation of commonly applied water quality standards language.
- 3H. Ecology will update the 5-year water quality standards development plan. Ecology will work with EPA to review the prioritization and dates of rule development timelines, including the appropriate placement in our work plan for updates to dissolved oxygen and fine sediment criteria, as appropriate.
- 3I. With support from the EPA NSTEPS, program, Ecology will help develop stressor-response relationships using several datasets with the intent in order to systematically translate narrative criteria to identify acceptable ranges of nutrient thresholds concentrations (TN and TP) protective of freshwater aquatic life uses WA streams. Ecology will pull together QA/QC data, develop conceptual models, and participate in reviewing technical analyses and technical reports summarizing the findings of the analyses expected in 2018. Based on the results of the analyses, Ecology will consider these analyses in future plans to update revisions to the Water Quality Assessment 303(d) listing methodologies and other state narrative interpretation methods for streams as needed.
- 3J. EPA will work with the Services on ESA consultation for the compliance schedule provision WAC 173-201A-510(4)(a)(i) submitted by Ecology on August 1, 2016. EPA will give updates to Ecology on the progress made in real time.
- 3K. Ecology will provide technical assistance to others in the development of use attainability analyses, variances, and other tools where a change in a standard appears appropriate. Ecology and EPA will work together throughout the development of such water quality standard changes. EPA will provide a timely response to use attainability analyses, variance submittals and other submittals from Ecology that require EPA approval or review.
- 3L. EPA will take the lead in coordinating a process to resolve conflicts created when different standards are adopted for shared waters (tribal and state jurisdictional boundaries).

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- 3M. EPA will provide information to Ecology on tribal water quality standards in a timely manner, and will work with the tribes to encourage outreach to state governments and the state's non-tribal citizens.
- 3N. Ecology and EPA will continue to work together on addressing priority nutrient problems to reduce current loadings of nitrogen and phosphorus to surface waters through existing programs and state priorities.
- 3O. EPA and Ecology will regularly share information and meet on an as needed basis, at least once a year, to discuss the status of ongoing and future water quality standard projects.